

planning, construction, and eventual operation of Nord Stream 2, needs to be granted formal permission as a gas transmitter. There are many regulatory hurdles in their way—hurdles that have not yet been cleared. The process at a minimum should take many months, and the process could be derailed at any time.

First, there has to be an inspection process. Each of Nord Stream 2's strings has to be inspected to make sure there are no leaks, and part of that requires confirming that the pipelines were installed correctly. Part of that has already begun with air. Nobody knows how it has been going.

Then, there has to be an additional technical certification. This will be extremely difficult for Nord Stream 2 AG because the bipartisan sanctions legislation that I wrote and passed with Senator SHAHEEN and that Congress passed imposes mandatory sanctions on anyone who certifies the pipeline for operation.

Now, pause and think about that for a second. The pipeline can't go into effect unless it is certified. U.S. law passed overwhelmingly by Democrats and Republicans in this Congress, signed into law in the U.S. Code, says anyone who certifies it faces mandatory, crushing sanctions from the United States. The company that was originally going to certify it withdrew after the sanctions became law. The only way that a different company would dare to certify is if they believed the Biden administration would look the other way, would bless their certification in outright defiance of U.S. law.

Then, apart from the technical issues, Nord Stream 2 AG still has to be certified as a gas transmission operator as a matter of regulation and law. That should take at a minimum many months and require delicate negotiations between the company and the regulators.

You know, what is striking is, everything that I am saying has been said by the Biden administration. So right now, their talking points are "There is nothing we can do. It is a done deal. We have surrendered. We have given up. There is nothing we can do," but when they were in the process of surrendering, they said everything I just told you.

Until recently, even the top officials of the Biden administration acknowledged that physical completion of Nord Stream 2 didn't make its activation a fait accompli.

On June 8, Secretary of State Blinken testified that "even when the pipeline is physically complete, for it to go into operation, it still requires insurance, it still requires various permits, and we are looking very carefully at all of that." Secretary Blinken said that "it was too late to stop the joining of those pipes. Its operation is another matter."

Secretary Blinken was wrong when he said it was too late to stop the join-

ing of the pipes because we stopped them for over a year, until Biden surrendered to Putin, but he wasn't wrong when he said we could still stop the operation of it.

Given these requirements and this time line, the path for America is obvious: We should sanction Nord Stream 2 AG, the parent company of the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline. That will automatically isolate the company, and it will signal our readiness to follow the law, to impose more sanctions, and to ensure that everyone knows that involvement with Putin's pipeline brings with it crippling, company-ending sanctions. Indeed, that is exactly why Congress has repeatedly passed legislation—bipartisan legislation—to stop this pipeline. But instead of obeying the law, President Biden decided brazenly and willfully to defy Federal law—to defy Congress's mandate.

In May, President Biden transmitted a communication to Congress that acknowledged, yes, he was obliged to impose sanctions on Nord Stream 2 AG for violating the sanctions that Congress had passed and passed overwhelmingly, but instead of imposing those mandatory sanctions on Nord Stream 2 AG, given the clear and unequivocal intent of Congress, the Biden administration chose instead to waive them. It was a disastrous decision. It was a decision based on weakness and capitulation to Russia. It hurt our friends and allies in Europe, and it hurt the United States of America.

It is a decision that can be reversed. Right now, the pipeline, if this pipeline goes into effect, will be the Biden-Putin pipeline. It doesn't have to be. This was designed at the outset to be the Putin pipeline, and when it was the Putin pipeline, we stopped it. Republicans stopped it. Democrats stopped it. We came together at a time of partisan division and we said together: Giving billions of dollars to Putin, to Russia, for aggressive military hostility, subjecting Europe to energy blackmail, making Europe dependent on Putin's gas, and destroying American jobs is bad all around.

Congress succeeded. It was the Putin pipeline until January 24, 2021. Joe Biden had just been sworn into office, and Putin, after a year of dormancy, began building the pipeline again because Biden had already signaled he intended to capitulate.

When we convene next week, I am going to discuss in greater detail the compromise that I have offered to the Biden administration and Senate Democrats to move forward on more of their nominees if they accept a compromise solution on Nord Stream 2. The Biden administration has had this compromise offer for 2 months, and they have done nothing with it.

But I would suggest something right now. In the course of my remarks, I have read quote after quote after quote from Senate Democrats. Senate Democrats know this pipeline is a disaster for America. Senate Democrats know

that surrendering to Putin is bad for America. But Senate Democrats are scared to stand up to a Democratic President.

I can tell you, when we had a Republican President, President Trump, there were some in the Trump administration who resisted these bipartisan sanctions, and as a Republican, I was perfectly willing to stand up to a Republican administration for those who were resisting these sanctions and to press them hard.

So my request to my Democratic colleagues is, show that you actually believe what you said in 2019 and 2020 and 2021. Show that you care about U.S. national security. Let's stand together, and let's reclaim that bipartisan consensus we have had for 2 years that Nord Stream 2 is bad for America and bad for our allies.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Cloture having been invoked, the clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Karen Erika Donfried, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (European Affairs and Eurasian Affairs).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

NOMINATION OF MONICA P. MEDINA

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I would like to speak in support of Ms. Monica Medina's nomination to be Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs.

I have known Monica for more than 30 years and can say without a shred of doubt that she is the most qualified and competent candidate to fill this position. She has worked for decades across multiple administrations on issues of environmental law and policy. She understands well the interconnected world we live in and knows that 21st-century U.S. foreign policy goes not simply beyond the water's edge but to the seas and the skies and the sands of the world, where universal threats and their solutions lie.

Monica is a proven public servant through and through. Over the years, she has fought for what matters most. For example, during her time at the Defense Department, she worked to end discriminatory practices against women in the military, to provide them with opportunities that were previously closed to them simply because of their gender.

After her time at DOD, she continued the track record of fighting for what is most important by calling out the connection between illegal wildlife trafficking and organized criminal networks, confronting illegal fishing that is too often tied to global piracy and human rights violations.

Her expertise in globe-spanning threats to our national security is exactly why former Secretary of Defense